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# Concepts of Kingship in Richard II

DEBORAH FIELD, '68

If we were to attempt to understand *Richard II* in a modern historical context, we would probably create more problems than we would solve. Although it is certainly true that, like all Shakespeare's plays, this deals with timeless thematic concerns, it is nonetheless impossible to come to a comprehensive grasp of those concerns without at least a familiarity with the Elizabethan frame of reference. It was in many respects more Medieval than Renaissance, and as deeply rooted in native British as in continental tradition.

The Elizabethan mind saw the world in much the same light as the Chaucerian had two centuries before, and the vision was all the more stubbornly insisted upon because it was slipping away. However much European thought was changing, the English still retained the view of an ordered universe, a chain of Being which linked man to God. This idea of a hierarchical superstructure is omnipresent in Elizabethan literature and nowhere more striking than in Shakespeare. In *Troilus and Cressida* Ulysses describes the

workings of the universe in purely sixteenth century terms.

The heavens themselves, the planets, and  
this center,  
Observe degree, priority, and place,  
Insisture, course, proportion, season, form,  
Office, and custom, in all line of order.  
And therefore is the glorious planet Sol  
In noble eminence enthroned and sphered  
Amidst the other, whose medicinable eye  
Corrects the ill aspect of planets evil,  
And posts like the commandment of a king,  
Sans check to good and bad. But when the  
planets  
In evil mixture to disorder wander,  
What plagues and what portents, what mutiny,  
What raging of the seas, shaking of earth,  
Commotion in the winds, frights, changes,  
horrors,  
Divert and crack, rend and deracinate,  
The unity and married calm of states  
Quite from their fixture! Oh, when degree is  
shaked,  
Which is the ladder to all high designs.  
The enterprise is sick! How could  
communities,  
Degrees in schools and brotherhoods in cities,  
Peaceful commerce from dividable shores,  
The primogenitive and due of birth,  
Prerogative of age, crowns, scepters, laurels,  
But by degree, stand in authentic place?  
Take but degree away, untune that string,  
And hark, what discord follows!

This was a world so intricately ordered that not one part of the whole could malfunction without disturbing all other parts. When the entire universe was thus affected, the precious harmony of the spheres was destroyed. The constantly applied image of celestial music was no mere literary mode; it was a philosophical metaphor. When King Richard, in the first scene of the play, remarks of Henry Bolingbroke, the usurper, "How high a pitch his resolution soars," he

is speaking on two separate levels. On the physical level, it is an indication of the force of Henry's rage, which is obvious to the spectators. In light of what we know is to happen, however, the words acquire new meaning, revealing a depth which would otherwise remain hidden.

"How high a pitch his resolution soars." Quite in keeping with the common stylistic device, the figure used is musical. But Henry's aimed-for pitch is beyond his rightful reach. He seeks the King's place in the celestial orchestra, and that place belongs only to Richard. Thus, Henry not only aspires to a higher degree which is traditionally the King's alone, but also threatens to destroy spherical harmony and universal order. The Elizabethan mind feared such turning away from the natural order of things with an almost morbid sense of forboding. Ulysses' warning,

Take but degree away, untune that string,  
And hark, what discord follows!

is echoed in *Richard II*, when Henry decides aloud to take the throne, and the Bishop of Carlisle protests against such an unnatural act.

Would God that any in this noble presence  
Were enough noble to be upright judge  
Of noble Richard. Then true noblesse would  
Learn him forbearance from so foul a wrong.  
What subject can give sentence on his King?  
And who sits here that is not Richard's  
subject?

Thieves are not judged but they are by  
to hear,  
Although apparent guilt be seen in them,  
And shall the figure of God's majesty,  
His captain, steward, deputy elect,  
Anointed, crowned, planted many years  
Be judged by subject and inferior breath,  
And he himself not present?

Henry's purpose, then, in ascending the throne, would be in direct opposition not only to the laws of nature, but to the divine laws of God, whose earthly representative is the anointed King. The action itself is objectionable, but the future effects of it will be even more dreadful.

My Lord of Hereford here whom you  
call King,  
Is a foul traitor to proud Hereford's King,  
And if you crown him let me prophesy,  
The blood of English shall manure the ground,  
And future ages groan for this foul act,

Peace shall go sleep with Turks and infidels,  
And in this seat of peace tumultuous wars  
Shall kin with kin and kind with kind  
confound.

Shakespeare speaks here with the insight gained from two hundred years of intervening history, much of it marred by the Wars of the Roses, which were probably directly attributable to Henry's usurping of the throne. The Bishop's prediction of "disorder, horror, fear, and mutiny" is thus quite accurate, and its dramatic intensity is all the greater because of that historical accuracy. Here is proof that cannot be refuted, for "the deposing of a rightful King" by Henry Bolingbroke plunged England into a series of civil wars which ended only when the Tudors, with their intuitive sense of politics, assumed regal authority. The Bishop is no false prophet in this regard. The truth of his words only demonstrates the truth of the concept that degree cannot be disturbed without dire consequences. He also brings up a rather sticky legal point when he asks,

What subject can give sentence on his King?  
And who sits here that is not Richard's  
subject?

The questions are rhetorical, but they can both be answered in the same way. Of course, Richard could be judged by no man there.

The King had a God-given right to rule, a fixed place in the fixed order of the universe. And neither his right nor his position could be lawfully taken from him, no matter what the provocation, which in this case was of some consequence. Richard was not a good King; he was extravagant, tyrannical, and politically unwise. It is evident at the beginning of the play that England would probably fare better under the rule of the politically shrewd Henry. But what of Richard's legal title to the throne? Which rule is to be followed, that of political expediency or rightful claim? The choice is Henry's, and he makes it.

Richard's final realization of the full meaning of the name of King is of great importance dramatically but very little thematically. When he perceives his own previous unworthiness, it is too late.

And here have I the daintiness of ear  
To check time broke in a disordered string;  
But for the concord of my state and time



Had not an ear to hear my true time broke.  
I wasted time, and now doth time waste me.

Again the harmony of the spheres, to which a King should be finely atuned. Richard was not — a fact of which he was at the end grimly aware. He remained the rightful King, because his right could not be taken from him, but he was powerless to act upon what was his alone, for the power now belonged solely to Henry.

The new King, however, was suffering from a guilt complex of such major proportions that at the end of the play he vows,

I'll make a voyage to the Holy Land,  
To wash this blood from my guilty hand.

Henry's dilemma is the initial one of whether right is to precede ability. He has disrupted the Medieval order of the universe by his "deposing of a rightful King," but he fits precisely into a much older tradition which would not have condemned his act.

English concepts of Kingship had been informed by two entirely separate streams, Anglo-Saxon and Celtic. From the Germanic peoples came the heroic ideal of the King who was braver, stronger, and sometimes wiser than everyone else. Fiercely devoted to the King was the comitatus, the personal guard which defended its leader to the death.

Even farther back in native British tradition is that of the true British, the first Celtic inhabitants of the island. Here is a concept of Kingship which is startlingly symbolic and not far removed from Greek, Egyptian, or Asiatic views. More sacrificial victim than leader, it is the King who is devoted to his people, for whose real or imagined transgressions he is often held responsible. He is the "corn-king" who must die if the land and his people are to live. Primitively, the King was indeed sacrificed to insure the continued fertility of the land, but gradually the practice became formalized, and the rite was only symbolically performed. Yet the idea of a ritual killing, a sacrificial death, remained as part of the mainstream of the wholly British tradition which had a significant influence on the English literature of the Middle Ages.

Both Richard and Henry fit into the pattern to some extent. It is Richard's misfortune that his "comitatus" is neither loyal

nor trustworthy, but he himself is hardly of heroic proportions. He may easily be taken, however, to resemble the sacrificial lamb. The image is his own, when, called before the assembled nobles to abdicate, he complains bitterly,

Yet I well remember  
The favours of these men: were they  
not mine?  
Did they not sometime cry all hail to me?  
So Judas did to Christ: but he in twelve  
Found truth in all, but one; I, in twelve  
thousand, none.

Thus the King, "the figure of God's majesty," is betrayed just as Christ was betrayed. The scapegoat image is easily carried through here, and it is even stronger in Henry's case. Usurper though he may be, Bolingbroke had sound political reasons for seizing the throne. But this cannot erase the sense of guilt Henry feels when he has committed the act. This guilt, the result of the crime of regicide, is the basis of the tetralogy which begins with *Richard II* and is completed in *Henry IV, Part I* and *II*, and *Henry V*. It is Henry V who expiates the sin, but his father who suffers for it. In this respect, Henry IV, too, is a sacrifice. But in his case the ceremony is far more ritualistic in its slow, steady progress toward the inevitable end. His death has the desired result, at least for a brief space of time, for Henry V's reign marked a period of both peace at home and victory on foreign soil, an infrequent state of affairs.

*Richard II* has been called "both a plea for and a warning against rebellion." It is Shakespeare's prophet of doom, the Bishop of Carlisle, who continually voices the warning that,

The woe's to come, the children yet unborn  
Shall feel this day as sharp to them as thorn.

Loyalties and values shift constantly in defiance of that same order which men feel obligated to uphold. Shakespeare is dealing with a moral order to which Elizabethans clung as the only bulwark against utter chaos, most generally present in civil strife, with which they were all too familiar. Yet there is a problem inherent in that order, for it prohibits change, and England chafes under the careless rule of a Richard II. It is within Henry's power to govern England as she

should be governed, but he cannot do so without committing a crime contrary to all the laws of God and nature. Here is the paradox. Good may come of his action, but evil must come of it, too. There is no other choice for Henry, and this is his tragedy. Told of Richard's murder, he responds with a perfectly balanced speech further demonstrating both his political keenness and his growing sense of guilt.

They love not poison that do poison need,  
Nor do I thee; though I did wish him dead,  
I hate the murderer, love him murdered.  
The guilt of conscience take thou for thy  
    labor,  
But neither my good word, nor princely favor;  
With Cain go wander through shades of  
    night,  
And never show thy head by day nor light.  
Lords, I protest my soul's full of woe,  
That blood should sprinkle me to make me  
    grow.

There is a double irony here, of which Henry is not fully aware. His is a fatalistic attitude, reminiscent of the Greek tragic heroes, an attitude of resigned commitment. He sees only too clearly that Richard's death is required for Henry to remain King, but he regrets the necessity of the action. It is significant that he speaks bitterly of the realization "that blood should sprinkle me to make me grow." That Henry should see Richard as a sacrifice for himself is within reason, and indeed Richard's death is Henry's life-blood. But it is unlikely that Henry conceives of himself as victim, and this is the true irony. For, just as Richard's death gives the kingdom to Henry, Henry's death gives it to his son, and with it, life to his people. In its simplest terms it is the birth and death cycle of the fertility myth.

## Joy

*The hart that dies  
Washed in the woods  
When October falls  
Squalling the countryside  
Drenching the world  
Hurling death crisp, fragmented  
To the sun  
When swept is the swallow  
Into space  
Grace . . .*

JANE O'CONNELL, '69

# *The Black Things*

MAUREEN CRIGHTON, '67

The day came slim through Batty Hogan's boarded-up window. It was grey outside and in; damp moulded the air, making his chamber experienced with the foul smells of life.

Batty moaned as the ship sailed off a cliff. He, the captain, again had lost control and they were falling lightly through space — amazing considering the weight of the frigate. Amazing it didn't drop heavy to the rocks below, smashing all and ending it in pieces. The captain abandoned before the passengers; the bed groaned with his tossing, and five cats jumped to the floor. Another buzzed around his head, soft-footing it over the pillow and finally stretching full length across the sleeper's chest, one paw stretched out lazily wanting to sharpen its claws on the blanket. Instead the blanket caught the claw and yanked it. She twisted to untangle herself, sensing perhaps that she was disturbing her owner. She was. Batty's lungs grew fur; he awoke smothered and angry. In his morn-

ing stupor he was cruel and bold and he retaliated by throwing the cat out of the bed with vehemence. After hitting the opposite wall with a thud, she bounced back onto the bed — unharmed, invulnerable — except perhaps for a dent in her self-satisfaction — a thing that a dish of cream would smooth out. But Batty was repentant as he watched his cat slink away; repentance stung at his skin sending a warm wave of pain to his mind. "Sorry dumb animal," he muttered as he swung listlessly out of bed.

While he was shaving, he began to whistle a tune, hoping that this sign of optimism would fool a day that had started badly. He stopped only to appraise himself, "God ain't I handsome," Hogan smiled at his beaming reflection, "I'll take 100 dozen." He pointed a crooked finger at the mirror and cut his face. This made one eye weep in solace for the painful day just beginning. For eight hours there would be hecklers to contend



with, narrow escapes, many accidents, mishaps — other people would die, have illegitimate babies, lose their jobs, have financial disasters. Thoughts too deep for a peddler's mind to swim in, he reasoned as he perfumed his face. (Nice smelling for the lady customers.)

The door began its timid rapping, then the banging. It was the picture boy who brought Batty his breakfast. Batty opened the door, looking as he did every morning to see whether Dominic had split the wood with his ferocious fists. The boy entered, a bad sight in the morning, neither white nor black but blue, yellow, red, green. Flagged, womaned, initialed, eagled — a child billboard, a circus darling and unfortunately for him, a mild freak. In spite of the gloom shooting at him from Batty's half-closed eyes, Dominic radiated a pleasure when he saw his friend.

"Batty, you goin' out today? It's a drunken day outside. Rain's coming and a lot of crazy things. Stay in or you'll be sick to your death."

Batty trembled at the thought of leaving his house, of risking the day. There was a time when none of the Hogans had to leave their warm homes. He remembered the first time he ran from his father's home and the winter air bit him home again fast. Fast to stay there and never so quick again to leave until his twenty-third birthday when his family disappeared. He never could remember where they had gone, though it was for certain that they never gave up their guardianship, but breezed slowly through a son's mind with their warnings and injunctions. The father with a bagpipe voice, sat on his memory droning the litany of offenses that life might commit; his flat-blistered face shook with a rage at paying his human penalty but pay it he wanted to. Yes. No. Better a son to pay it; the old get older and too tired.

"Where have they gone, leaving me here?" thought Batty hoping that some past would come and prevent him from leaving for work. He had found a new father once; she was a woman. From her he inherited his business although she thought him unworthy and was fairly right. Then he realized that he was

ignoring the boy Dominic, just as she had ignored him when he was young to sympathy and earnest to discouragement. The boy tugged at his weaknesses irreverently. Sometimes at his strength. Never leaving him in peace or at peace with his sense of duty. When Batty chose to confide in the boy he would reply — "But you're afraid of all the wrong things." Like Dominic telling him, he had told the woman and she told him back until there was nothing left but not to listen, not to tell.

The man who saves must not discriminate fears — all are equal in the sight of him who has made it a way of life. Why shouldn't the boy learn young how ugly the tattoos will make his sleeping, how fierce his waking. How oblivious the in between.

"Why, Dominic, don't you cover your skin," he lunged in surprise. "It's a nightmare. Why did your parents put all those pictures on you? And why do they send you to me every morning before I eat breakfast?"

As he said it Batty noticed that the dagger-pierced heart on Dominic's shoulder bled softly, trying to be unobtrusive. "Don't worry kid," said Batty in late alarm, "when you grow taller all those pictures will turn to freckles."

But the balm was too late and too little; the eagle on Dominic's right arm turned its face toward war and anger.

"You talk like these belong to me, like all along I want them there to make you sick with. They only hurt your eyes, but me—. Say you're sorry and make me stop before I curse your whole day."

"Ha! My every day is cursed. You've watched that. What can I expect from a boy's curses. Relief. Every day the things chase me. They want me more and more with them. Then I worry enough so that what might be never has a chance to happen. I save myself and a world with my fears."

"I'm not afraid," said Dominic qualifying this with his finger, "of a lot of things anyway, just one or two little things that don't count for anyone except me. I mean you wouldn't need to worry for my share, and I'll come along with you today and take half your burden."

"Scram, you nothing kid. A helper, a successor I don't need."

"Yeah you found it. That's one of the things I get afraid of. Bye Batty." Dominic left quietly, trying to tuck his tattooed arms into his short-sleeved shirt. Instead he only ripped the frayed shirt — not on the seam, not even on the sleeve — but the worn plaid cloth parted on a red-sea's width between his shoulder blades uncovering the shapely outline of a beauty queen.

After knocking a milk bottle over in his slow escape down the stairway, Dominic paused to light a match. The stairs were heavy with dirt; he brushed a cobweb from his forehead, then surveyed the stairs once again. In places the carpeting was loose. Even after warning himself, Dominic tripped on the second landing. He half-slid, half-tumbled and twisted himself to the bottom. His heart and pulse beat him to the first floor by a lead of three minutes. When most of him had caught up to the rest, he jumped up from the floor, spit at the stairs and brushed himself off. He stayed hidden in the entrance until he saw the street was clear. His shirt was ripped even more now and Dominic did not want the neighborhood children to laugh at the woman he carried loyally on his back. She was there for life and not to be insulted. The last threatening child had disappeared around the corner when he decided to venture out and make a dash for his home and his jacket.

A hand reached out of the air; a muscular arm spun Dominic around. "Where's Bartholomew Hogan?" demanded the voice of the hand still clutching Dominic's arm.

"Don't live here no more. Moved to Morristown," Dominic replied without hesitation, knowing the thing holding on to him would be suspicious if he didn't.

"Whatcha doing in this here building then?" The hand released Dominic, pointing toward a sign on the apartment building which said "Condemned."

"Delinquent. I'm just a neighborhood troublemaker. If you catch Batty let me and my friends know — we'll work him over for you."

"Thanks," said the Hand humbly, "but I'm with the Internal Revenue and Uncle

Sam wants this one alive." Dead, he thought, makes the accounts closed or the money too scattered for profit.

By 7:57 Batty stood in the doorway. If he left three minutes early he could quit at 4:57. He sniffed at the morning air; there was that haunting odor of danger — a mixture somewhere between acid, gasoline and gunpowder — yet subtler. One whiff of the air we breathe would kill a country boy, he thought, then smiled because he had the same exact thought every morning at the same time. The routine of his mind seldom varied. He knew it by heart like a litany. "It's not only poison," he recited outloud, "but evil-thinking air out to harm and explode things — any arbitrary thing it finds around." The wind blew gently around him in protest. Sly, he thought, very cagey but you won't catch me. Shivering from the now cool breeze, Batty jumped onto his black motor scooter. He checked his supply of shoestrings and his knife sharpener, then left for his rounds.

He swerved around the corner in his motor scooter. The stranger in black with big hands was following him at a running pace. He rolled up onto Colonel Mason's lawn to hide behind the garage. The leaves were thick back there. Mason's yard was turning into wilderness, and his grounds were the last of the civilized places left in the neighborhood, a remnant garden crawling around the yard. Where he hid now, vegetation was decomposing — wet and slimy — the place for snakes. For him snakes were a constant worry; he became less conscious of incipient danger and safety before the Black stranger passed by. He did notice the tattooed errand boy who brought him the bagels every morning from Fiorenzo's shop as he passed by calling "Bartholomew." "That's all I need," he thought, "a freak to scare away my customers." It seemed to him that anyone who had so many needles stuck in his skin must have holes there. And something important, something vital that he needed inside his head must have leaked through all those holes . . . Batty knew that the boy wanted to tag along just to spoil the pitiful little business of a shoestring peddler.

Batty crept onto Mason's back stoop and



tapped timidly on the door. The preliminaries over with, he stretched with a feline grace. Then he stretched again, remembering the pleasure of the first, yawning to work the sleep out of him. Like a shoestring serpent he was charmed up towards the sky and as if he were elastic he grew upwards until his head was in the sweet smelling clouds for he knew that Colonel Mason was not going to answer the door. He wouldn't answer it because he wasn't home and Hogan was free of him for the week. This forced him up another thousand feet . . . he could see planets where flowers grew all lovely with the sun, happy with a gardener's attention.

"Colonel Mason," Batty hissed, "you bum, come out and fight." The house became darker and emptier. Soft laughter blew a warm, wet breath on the window pane. It grew louder. No one was there but Hogan; he saw the life signs on the window, the deserted hall behind it. He looked to see what was causing the happy disturbance. It was the best thing to do under the circumstances. If his life were not always in danger he would have made time to laugh occasionally.

Once a week Hogan stopped at the Colonel's house to sharpen the old man's sword. Without the words Mason would ask him to have coffee and doughnuts. Without any words he would tell Batty that he had won World War I singlehandedly and that Batty wouldn't have been fit to string his shoelacings in those days — never mind go through a whole war at his side. When the Colonel finished sneering at him, Batty had a ritual clock in his head that told him it was time to leave. Leave he did with supper money in his pocket. A notch in his stamina.

Fog rolled in brazenly, as if it were the sun with a day to welcome it. The peddler returned to his scooter. Within minutes he felt prepared to combat the Neptune Street territory. It was one of the few streets in the town where kids still wore sneakers and not loafers. The only problem with that was that they tend to slither up unsuspected — get under foot before there's any warning. Batty didn't like rubber soled quiet-stepped kids. He had, however, nothing against them buying his shoelaces.

While he was parking the scooter under a maple, his customary spot, a noose dropped slowly from the upper branches. Batty felt the pleasant but ominous pressure of the rope as it caressed his crown. At first he thought a leaf had blown down to tossle his hair. But as a rope dropped past his eyes and straightened itself out over his nose, an alarm rang shaking his whole body with its call to danger. He looked up into the tree permitting the rope to slide down around his neck and tighten its grasp on him. He could see the wide-eyed monster. And he could taste acid fear in his mouth. He could feel the rope aching to burn his neck and wall off the short gasping breath forcing its way through his throat. Then a calm voice rode evenly over his fear.

"Nervous Mister?"

Batty tugged at the rope and loosened it, then began to pull whatever belonged to the voice down from the tree. Instead, he only rocked the bough and it swayed back and forth — yielding nothing but a small nest. An egg, veined blue and delicate, splattered on the sidewalk. Enraged, he struggled harder; carefully aimed stones argued back more forcefully. All the time the voice from the tree was seeking a truce. "Can't you take a joke? I was just playing!"

The rocks were too much disaster for one lone man. Batty ran to the safety of Widow Carlson's house. Even her punishments were more welcome (and more justly meted out) than those of her young charge — he thought he had recognized the novice terrorist that tormented him constantly for early morning entertainment.

The widow was cunning. She stalked her porch waiting for poor frightened Batty to arrive safely under her wing. Blarney Hogan she dubbed him.

"My poor dear man," cried the widow, "don't exert yourself again today. I'll buy all your shoestrings and you can take some time off and chat with me." The widow smoothed down her blazing red hair for nothing; it frizzed out petulant and uncontrollable. She thought she had him now. The man was obviously in a state of shock so she led him

into her living room. "What can I offer you?" She winked at him; the peddler gasped with horror, unable to answer. Mistaking his nervousness for reticence, the widow nudged him toward the couch. She began to wipe his brow with a lace handkerchief. It rankled his skin. Quickly Hogan brushed her hand aside but she was fast and seized his hand closing it in her vise-like grip. Her voice quavered in its low pitch — accustomed as it was to speaking louder. "Oh Bartholomew, it's been so long since a man's looked at me the way you're looking at me now."

"Terror, sweet lady, pure terror. A husband I won't be. A lover — I'll go somewhere else."

"You kill me honey, you really kill me. You old sweetmouth, why you really couldn't discourage me if you tried. Win a few, lose a few — that's what I always say," smiled the Widow Carlson.

Batty saw that she was stricken. In his real heart he pitied the loveless. This day with its dangers, its sadnesses the earth over and above made his real heart anxious and sad. He prayed forgiveness . . . for the cat he threw against the wall, for the boy he humiliated, for the Colonel he wished to fight . . . now for the widow that he had rejected and insulted. "It is not what I am truly," he hoped out loud. "It is that I fear for the world that I become so nasty."

The widow was not listening; she was rearranging herself in the uncaring mirror, and asking him to make sure the door was locked when he left.

Batty walked dejectedly towards the door. He suffered for all those too busy to suffer for themselves. The expiator. A world with strange needs breeds strange services; punishments work on very few, he felt.

"I am willing," he cried to the neighborhood, "but so often?" An angry mother robin answered him; she swooped down and buzzed his head. Throughout the neighborhood birds were screeching at him — some flew overhead prepared to attack. Batty yelled "Uncle." But they wouldn't stop. Why should I fear them, he asked himself. Why should I, a descendent, perhaps, of warriors, warlords,

kings even, fear these harmless creatures? He could crush them in his fist, ground them into dust with his foot. But he was not cruel. The harmless mother robin dove towards his wide-opened eyes. Batty dodged her vicious attack; she brushed the side of his head and flew in crooked, frantic flight until she regained her composure. It was an embarrassing situation. How could a grown man run from birds. As the robin circled his head once again with kamakazi determination, Batty thought quickly — now is the time not to faint, now is the time to run. As he ran, he ran dead-end. Everywhere his path was blocked — whether with fences or bushes, or clotheslines — everything transformed into blockade walls. The entire neighborhood was in conspiracy with the black things that usually chased him every day. He wondered where they were this day. Perhaps they had been hiding and having some harmless fun with him for a change. Nothing in the line of a major disaster had happened. They were planning to wear him out and reel him in for the kill — exhausted, too weak to fight back. Again he was in that ticklish boat; one poke on the wooden ribs and it would laugh itself into sinking or toppling over the edge of the world. Does the captain abandon ship or does the ship abandon the captain — a little of both he guessed.

He could see the brink, and the edge was beneath his feet. Concrete sped into a hostile greyness, dizzying with its quickness — several times he felt that it had risen and slapped him in the face. Black, a void, approached him. He swerved but not in time. To his surprise it supported him, yet he waited for the blackness to open and receive him into itself, as happens in sleep's blackness. Still at every step he prepared to fall. Shadows closed in around him, he ran boxed about by queer forms that attacked him — pecking at his head, determined to extinguish the little light that was left for him to see. His eyes gone, he would be in constant darkness.

They did box him in and the box grew smaller and smaller until he tripped over the edges, broke through the black cardboard wall and fell. Dragging himself to his





*Illustration by Julie Geoghegan, '67*

feet, he saw that his palms were scraped raw. "See what I've done," he jubilantly raised his hands to the sky, "by myself, see what I have done." Every line of fortune ran blood. Again he tried to escape what was invisible and chasing him. But his mechanical running was destroyed in the final fall. He crouched on the ground, weak and too exhausted to move. Slowly he pulled himself over to a lawn and sat there submissively — waiting for the furies to take him or the earth to swallow him whole. Nothing. Nothing came. He passed into weariness, a moment's deliverance. Green, cool oblivion. Nothing then left, invaded by slit-eyed snakes. He opened his eyes quickly. He was still with the earth. The sound of a motor buzzed around him and he felt protected by the sound. It circled him, a waved fortress flowing sound strong around him. "Speak to me, bring me back with you," he demanded. The motor stopped close by him; it was the motleyed boy, Dominic.

"What's this, the good life?" Dominic laughed softly when he saw that Batty was resting on the lawn and sat down beside him. "Where have you been? I've been chasing you all day. Then I saw you running away and leaving the scooter behind you."

Batty gazed mournfully at Dominic. Raising himself up to the boy's level he bent close, breathing seriously into his face. "You are good and nothing will be your fault, nothing in the world will be made bad by you."

"What were you running for?" Dominic was impatient with praise. "You are getting weary from this job. Let me take over. Then you can go."

"No. No. From eight to five I must move through this job and then I go home to hide — not before. Then I have saved the day and not let it stop for my wishes."

"Please, let me take over," Dominic pleaded.

But Batty refused to answer him. Both sat there, not understanding what they seemed to know between themselves. Dominic felt the emptiness between them in the silence; he wanted to fill it with loud talking.

"Hey," he ruptured the silence with his weird excitement, "you know that black

thing that you said was after you. Well you know who it is?"

"Sssh," warned Batty, "He has been with me lately."

"Then you know."

Batty answered with a nod of his head, then walked to the motor scooter signalling Dominic to follow. "Come, now I'm going to a new house. A new person. Just moving in. It should be about time now for me to be rewarded."

In a few minutes they rode up to the new apartment house. Batty asked Dominic to wait outside. He rang the bells for the first, second and third floors and no one responded. With the fourth bell, he had a streak of luck. A buzzer sounded invitingly releasing the lock on the door. In a dimly lit hallway he walked very cautiously. The door sprung shut behind him with a bang that sent the poor peddler scampering up the stairs. In his ears he heard flapping of wings, the beat of pursuit and attack. A shadow lunged towards his chest passing through him without pain until it was safely left behind — grotesque and sharp now growing from the stairs. Through his mind flashed pandemonium in a revolving whirlwind globe. Broken bodied hunger; tyrant emaciated country-east, west; rot. Ten thousand no named dead and wounded. One million to come. A plea and no help for it. Speed ignited the globe, the air fanned the flames with a blacksmiths bellow. His fears grew bigger; yes he was doing well. Batty walked through the flaming ashes and passed out from the heat.

In another instant he was conscious. An attractive matronly woman was placing a cold compress on his forehead. Batty felt himself relax; his muscles stopped twitching, his heart beat quietly. He wished to sleep. The woman helped him to his feet. She was dressed in green and orange, and her fragrance was as sweet as the earth after rain. All about her was calm and refreshing. She knew who he was; it had been a long time since anyone had known him before he knew them. He discovered that her name was Cretia, a name perhaps not gentle enough. When Cretia saw that he had recovered she



turned her powerful gaze upon him. Lulled almost to sleep the peddler sank into the dark of her brown eyes and there rested for eons until she chose to release him.

"Tell me, we have watched you run up and down this block since we moved in. Have you been properly frightened?"

"We live in a very frightening world," explained Batty.

"Don't be absurd," scolded Cretia. "Everyday this world becomes more civilized and a better place to live in. Why my husband, God rest his soul, was a safety engineer. I know how many countless of thousands of people work night and day to make this world safe. Soon hazards will be nonexistent."

"Hah. What does a woman know, not about the little world, the big one. Little worlds are safe for most people."

"Great men take care of those things. There is nothing to fear. Nothing."

"I worry too that there will soon be nothing if I don't keep alive my worrying. It keeps me running from the things that chase me," said Batty. He was unsure of himself. The past seemed as if it had never happened, and that he never was what he thought himself to be. Anyhow, perhaps she was right. Most likely.

Cretia ignored him and made her preparations. She brewed a tea, an absynthe, that tasted like oriental peace of mind, and served it to the peddler to strengthen the dormance in him. Hesitantly she proposed a toast: "To peace, to calm. To living without guilt."

"You are good for the soul," he spoke with a smile.

"See how quickly you can forget your worries. As I've said before, we've been watching you and wondering when you'd decide to come up here to visit. We expected you before this."

Her voice came from a distance and Batty thought perhaps he had misunderstood her. However, he was too happy and drowsy to ask Cretia to explain herself. She gently droned on: "It's strange how in one moment a person can surrender their old selves and end their old life. It's interesting to see how readily they are willing to replace it." Cretia drained the last drop of sweetness from the

cup and set it down with finality, shattering silence.

Just then Batty heard a demanding horn blowing at him from the street. It was Dominic, a worried Dominic. Batty ignored the call from outside and spoke to Cretia, careless of time, heedless of all that once seemed so urgent in his living. He had known her forever, like a calm place a man is always too busy to get to, or the water he forgets to drink when he's thirsty and the want of it is still there, or the escape into a moment's safety in a long hour. Yes, he would come here often to win his peace, a new birthright — to start again in a new direction. To save is hopeless; to hope divine. But that he was finished with. A good world began to reign green and bright forever around him. He could tell that Cretia was aware of her hypnotic gift by the sureness of her movements, the confidence in her command to cease his fears, lay them aside for quiet relief. If only he could repay her. Of course he would visit often, even bring Dominic, as the boy was plagued as much as he was. But Dominic was young, and trouble he laughed at though the saving he wanted.

"What can I give you Cretia? Shoestrings? Can I sharpen your knives? Run an errand? Let me serve."

Cretia laughed. "Subserve, dearest; for my gifts I demand a little more payment."

Batty didn't care that he had not understood her, and smiled in return, "Anything dear lady. Anything you ask."

"You will learn not to be so quick."

Batty missed the tone of hysteria; a sinister music pleased him.

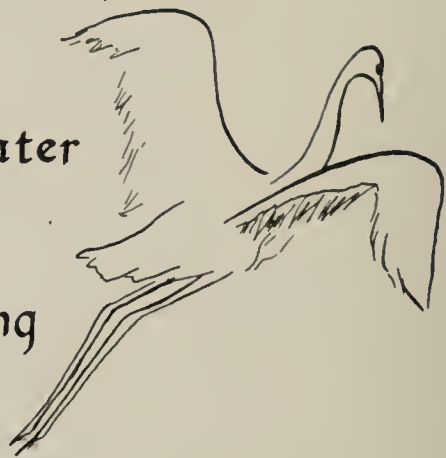
"Oh, before you leave I have several favors that you will do. Stop your fears and be happy. And, oh yes, would you please go out on the porch and bring me in a bundle. It will have great significance in helping me change your attitude."

Batty rushed out toward the porch door. Cretia opened it for him, then shoved him through a porchless exit. His heart died before he hit the cement.

Dominic sped down the street chasing a figure in black, pursued by a yapping neighborhood dog.

# The Crane

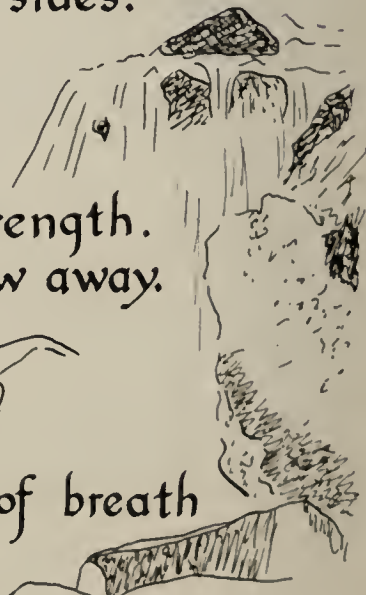
I saw a crane at this small tidal inlet  
When I came here alone.  
I think he must have come  
From far steep-shouldered water  
With the tide  
To dig a little at the cliffs,  
And I saw three boys walking  
Stop to watch him balance  
Agonized



As sun breeze tumbled sand grains down.  
He drew his sickle neck in close  
And over rocks black-twisted  
Quick and open just like oysters  
Danced a wet waltz.



Then we saw him fall and swallow sand.  
And as he struggled with his sticks  
To stand erect  
The boys joined foolish fish-ballasted gulls  
Hooting till they had to hold their sides.  
One boy in his contempt  
Scooped a shell from sand  
And mud and kelp  
And pitched it out with all his strength.  
The crane stretched up and flew away.  
He glided air hyperbolas  
And streamlined,  
Disappeared from view  
Of those three boys all drained of breath  
And still.



Mary J. Luti '69



# Static

SUSAN RUSSELL, '69

The day after Christmas in the pharmacy I wrote a letter on a paper bag, just for something to do. December twenty-sixth has about it the worn look of crinkled silver tinsel, crumpled wrapping paper, and cranberry sauce staining the dining-room tablecloth; everyone stays home to clean up the mess. There were few customers in the pharmacy that night, which was Sunday, a slow day anyway.

I kept telling Peter to fix the "Christmas Cards — Half Price — Time Limited" sign in the window. It leaned toward Ward Hill — and worse, it blocked my view. I gave up counting Fords and even Chevrolets last summer because it was getting so that after work I counted ceiling tiles, letters on billboards, and sidewalk squares, just out of habit.

The pumps (even the raspberry, which no one ever wants anyway) were filled. Ice, empty wastebasket, fresh coffee, tuna tasting like the Seabrook clam flats — and smelling worse — everything was in order. Even Peter had run out of prescriptions and was tearing Christmas wrappers off the Whitman's Samplers. You can always tell what holiday is coming by looking at the Whitman's Samplers. Christmas wrappers are just off when it's time for red plastic bands and fluorescent bows for Valentine's Day. St. Patrick's Day, Easter, Thanksgiving, then Christinas — it's better than a calendar. It's fun too, speculating on which boxes make the entire cycle each year.

On Sunday nights the store is dead. The whole town is dead. Sometimes I drive through and visit all the high spots: the

library, the old high school, the new high school, Bob's Sandwich Shop, and, inevitably, old Steven's house in the wilds of Ward Hill. The radio stations don't even work on Sunday nights. There is never any music and since I only half listen, any educational program or the news is out of the question. WHAV, which I believe is at least a forty-four watt station, is usually the answer, but Guy Lombardo or a musician of that ilk adds less than a festive note to my wandering soul.

For those who have no driver's license, however, there is little to do and the majority of the town's restive youth ends up in the pharmacy. That night, when Christmas was being torn off the Whitman's boxes, five kids came in. One boy ordered a coffee regular for himself and the girl beside him suggested, "Coke?" mouse-like, and raised her eyebrows slightly. I made four cokes at a time, lining them up underneath the soda water faucet and without moving them, filled each by squirting the water on my spoon, tilting it at different angles. I put my pen back into my mouth and stared at the paper bag sternly, implying that when one is in college, one has Things to Accomplish. All five sat at the counter, saying little, sipping self-consciously from the striped plastic straws. The cranberry-loden girl on the end, who wasn't with a boy, asked a few irrelevant questions of the boy beside her, trying to fit in. The mouse-girl sat mutely on her stool, swaying back and forth distractedly, and stared at the pink hole-punctured fountain back. Suddenly I noticed that they all had bleached hair so I went down back to laugh. When I came back to the fountain, I set ten of the clocks on the shelf over the cigars and two of the alarms, just for the heck of it.

The last time I tried the alarm clock trick, which is my last-resort diversion, was the day of the three hundred twenty-fifth anniversary of the town. It was summer then and the doors were closed to keep the cool in or the hot out — or something — and people walked by with their children and their lawn chairs, going "over town." There was a huge parade that day and a pageant at the stadium that night, supervised by my Catholic Daughter leader, who was always doing something

Civic. There weren't even any cars going by the pharmacy because the traffic was blocked going over the bridge. Peter and I sat on the fountain stools and talked mostly about the town's great History.

The all-time heroine and patroness of the day was Hannah Dustin, a matron of undeniable spirit who was captured by a despicable band of bloodthirsty savages and shipped up the Merrimack to their camp. She, however, being of stalwart pioneer stock, scalped her captors and returned to her marveling family. For this she earned a life-sized statue of herself brandishing her hatchet in the middle of G.A.R. Park, a Duston-Dustin dispute over the spelling of her name, and a horde of illustrious progeny who show up at every occasion meriting a true pioneer descendent.

Whittier, too, wrote poems about my town. In fact, he was born there. His house has been visited by every Girl Scout, (I've been there twice.) Boy Scout, service club, and civic group which is truly civic or serviceable. Somehow Whittier loses some of his charm for me when he writes about the "immortal Merrimack."

One isn't reminded of history every day, however, and the day after Christmas was winter and Sunday night and quiet. P.J., Sav, and the guys who graduated from high

school two years ago and who hang around the Stop & Shop parking lot across the street weren't even there. They usually sit on the parking curb or in their cars — one of them has a new MG — and talk about the races or the fights. When they were in high school they were really big — captains of the football and track teams — and they haven't forgotten, even though everyone else has. At eight o'clock they usually come over to the pharmacy and read the *Record* to find out the results of the last race at Rockingham. P.J. told me last year that he was going to Cornell and I believed him, but he was still at the fountain reading the *Record* when I was home for Thanksgiving. Now I don't believe him anymore. He said that he's going to be a State Police Trooper but I don't believe that either.

It was December twenty-sixth and I had started working on the seventeenth and would be finished on the thirty-first. I hadn't worked since I had gone to school in September, but nothing had changed. Danny, one of my co-workers, and a five-year man at pharmacy school, was engaged, and "Dearie," the senile old perfume lady, hadn't been in. But nothing had really happened. When I walked out of the pharmacy for the last time on September second, I cried. This time I just wanted to get away.

## Cycle World

Million-motored vanguard of a headlong race  
Glass-glistening, road-roaring, chrome-plated hordes  
Scruffy pariahs black-leathered and buckled  
Outlaws and ownlaws  
And parts of us still.  
Glitter-machines of pulsating zoom —  
Doom,  
In the noontime of concrete deserts,  
Doom,  
In the midnight of strobe-lit infernos,  
decorum and reason  
to  
chaos and shriek.

KATHLEEN A. ROGERS, '69



# Everyword

LOUISE MANFREDI, '67

## The Semantic Summit.

Last week a meaningful meeting took place at Lake Linguistic, a neutral spot located in the binding of Webster's unabridged dictionary. This meeting was to a large extent the culmination of a growing feeling of unrest among certain intellectuals and other sensitive beings. Called by the Word, the summit's immediate purpose was to discover and investigate the causes of what seemed to be a widespread illness-nebulous neurosis. With sincere but controlled alarm, the Word requested that certain problems be considered at the conference; feeling that his own loss of identity was symptomatic of a more widespread sickness, the Word demanded the clarification of his significance. He desired also that certain of his colleagues assert their own dignity and worth. Besides the Word, there were at the meeting 123 representatives of the lexicographer's world; but since time was limited, the more verbal members of the community tended to dominate the conversation. Cliché, Sarcasm, Simile, and Pun — each according to his unique ability—entered frequently into the discussion, but in the end it was Exegesis who was able to direct the assembly to some appropriate, if not complete, conclusions.

WORD. Fellow members of the aural and written world, for some years now I have

been grappling with the meaning of my existence. Certainly I know my experience is neither unique nor original, but I am convinced of its importance not only for myself but also for those with whom I am united. My problem at the present time is somewhat of a paradox, having to do with the relationship between my lasting search for my identity and my increasing feeling of ambiguity.

CLICHE. To thine own self be true.

SARCASM. Amen.

WORD. To go on, if my memory serves me correctly, when I first came into being my meaning seemed manifest. I rarely found myself in an unfitting context and so I usually felt quite secure. But today I often feel out of place, alien to my surroundings.

EXEGESIS. Before you continue, my dear Word, it is, I think imperative that we qualify and clarify certain points.

SARCASM. Now we get to the meat of it.

CLICHE. Yea, man does not live by bread alone.

EXEGESIS. Is it not true, Word, that you are somewhat of an abstraction and, furthermore, that you knew at the beginning that you would be more apt to be misconstrued than others of our community? Dog, for instance, has never had an identity crisis.

SARCASM. Except during the early stages of his biological and semantic evolution.

EXEGESIS. Thank you, sir, for your informative remark. To get on with the problem, Word, your dilemma centers upon connotation and denotation; but the basis for it is psychological, historical, and philosophical.

PUN. That's it, in a word.

WORD. I think, myself, that the problem arises from a growing and deepening awareness of what it is that I conceptualize. I have always felt the paradox of my simple complexity, but until this time I have been rather content with my intuitive comprehension of the situation. It is not that I have not felt the amorphous exhilaration of growth before . . .

SARCASM. What a magnificent statement—depth, sincerity, subtlety. Say no more; it makes me all sad inside. Oh how I sometimes long for the gift of expression. How I often . . .

SIMILE. Paradox — It is like breaking open the simply shaped white egg to find inside the complex little chicken.

CLICHE (with humor). Which came first . . .

EXEGESIS. Enough of this digression! It seems most fitting that we begin to solve the problem by a thorough analysis of Word's last statement. When Word was arbitrarily brought into existence, those who chose him did so in order that they might name a certain experience and its accompanying implications. That which Word signifies did not come into existence with him, nor can it lose its existence with his death.

CLICHE. The coward dies a thousand times; the valiant tastes of death but once.

SARCASM. And if I choose the middle path, I might escape the whole thing.

EXEGESIS. As I was saying, since that which Word signifies is at bottom a real thing, and since he is only an arbitrary sign . . .

WORD. But . . .

EXEGESIS. Don't worry, we will assert your

special uniqueness later, but first we must get to the bottom of things; we must ask the basic questions . . . (Noticing Simile's contortions) Yes, Simile?

SIMILE. Get to the bottom of things, like the bucket in the well, which if it has a long enough rope, can get to the bottom of the well.

PUN. Well isn't that interesting.

EXEGESIS. Gentlemen, we must have some discipline; we cannot continue in this manner. So with Word's permission, I will begin to relate my explanation of the predicament, an explanation which is based on an analogy to a certain philosophical theory. Of course, gentlemen, if you have any worthwhile comments to add to my analysis, I will be happy to consider them. But I will tolerate no more of this nonsensical gibberish.

WORD. As I was saying in the beginning of this conference, my primary purpose in calling this summit was to clarify my meaning. If Exegesis feels that his perceptions will help us to accomplish this end, I am more than ready to listen to them.

EXEGESIS. The philosopher I'd like to refer to postulates three levels of existence—*aesthetic, ethical, and religious*. Combine these with evolution, and . . .

SARCASM. Oh, brother!

EXEGESIS. On the *aesthetic level*, early in his existence, Word was a term denoting the simple comprehension of a complex and abstract subject. Since the understanding of the subject had not sufficiently evolved, however, Word represented concrete effects of the abstract rather than the abstract itself.

SIMILE. Abstract and concrete effects. It is something like the cloud which disappears as it rains.

CLICHE. It never rains but it pours.

EXEGESIS. On the *ethical level*, gentlemen, Word goes beyond the concrete effects and points with more certainty to the real abstract.

WORD. And then the leap — I am what I signify — I am . . .





*Alas, said I, that I must needs keep silence; my lips, and the lips of all my countrymen, are polluted with sin; and yet these eyes have looked upon their King, the Lord of hosts. Whereupon one of the seraphim flew up to me, bearing a coal which he had taken with a pair of tongs from the altar; he touched my mouth with it, and said, Now that this has touched thy lips, thy guilt is swept away, thy sin pardoned. And now I heard the Lord say, Who shall be my messenger? Who is to go on this errand of ours? And I said, I am here at thy command; make me thy messenger.*

*Isaias 6;5-8*

# *Psalm for Meanwhile*

*Serenity lies in splinters, Lord  
brittle-tender  
at my feet  
yet I grind the slivers  
with my toes  
and feel no pain  
only a duration of dullness  
along the calluses  
of calluses  
along the self  
or unself.  
you  
could penetrate  
but always you are bland  
now  
slice me sore  
into one crooked ache  
and soothe me  
with raw gall  
soul-sting me  
with your love  
blow me till I shatter  
but then pick up my pieces.*

ELAINE CARROLL, '68







*Illustrations by Julie Geoghegan, '67*

*Oh Lord, I am always waiting  
but time spans itself  
slowly  
with the monotony  
of a smooth stone  
and traces centuries of  
never  
around its own circumference.  
midpoint  
in the spindrift  
I suspend  
and would joy unbound*

*in this blazing now  
but  
this now is a repetition  
Lord, I am alpha-empty  
and oversick of promises  
I wait and wait  
in a perpetual headache  
yet you refuse once more  
oh why have you forsaken?  
but abide  
abide, my soul  
advent is not eternal.*

# *Solstice*

The coming of this quietness  
                    unnoticed  
Bursts the All-Hollow chatter  
Shatters the sound the voice makes  
Breaks even the one  
            small  
            almost-said  
            truth  
into the fragments of a winter death.  
            Underneath all  
            all undone.

The coming of this quietness  
                    feared  
Bears the splintered worries  
Carries the long-destroyed things  
Brings the still rough  
Outlines of hopes  
            dying in wintered doorways  
            tight closed against the cold.

The coming of this quietness  
                    affirmed  
Spares the unknowing crier  
Fires a spark too long weak  
Speaks softly  
            as night fills nearby stragglers  
            waiting  
            for signposts to a later truth.  
                    In the night stilled  
                    still the Yes.

SISTER MARY DAVID, S.N.D., '69



# The Sacred Ground

DOROTHY WHITE, '67

I don't care, Terry thought, he shouldn't have yelled at me, it was as much his fault as mine. He sopped up the puddle with a slightly sour sponge, and under his breath he mimicked the old priest's berating:

"Wine is expensive these days, you know, and we can't afford to repeat your clumsiness. It's a lucky thing for you, Terence Tahoma, that the wine had not been consecrated. If you can't be more careful in the future, we'll have to have you replaced." "

Hah! That's a laugh. As if anyone in his right mind would ever get up at five-thirty every morning and plod down here just so some creeping senility could yell at him, saving his Reverence. It would serve him right, it just would, if I'd up and quit on him. Too bad for him. Well I don't care. What's he gonna do, I'd like to know, when I'm in the seminary and he finds himself without any altar boy at all. Maybe he'll ask that squinty Flint. I can see him now, dancing around the altar with that club foot of his, step-clomp, step-clomp. That'd do it, drive him hoopy. Hoopy Holzkopf, they'll call him. Then when I'm all ordained the bishop will come up to me and say to me, "Father Tahoma, it is with great regret, harumph, great regret, I say, that I tell you we must relieve old Father Holzkopf from his duties at the Navaho mission. He has, you know, gone hoopy. You, Father Tahoma, will replace him."

Terry got up, and with the sponge scrunched up small in his hand, he walked over to the sink. He closed his eyes. The words of consecration hammered inside his head; he squeezed the sponge.

He was not surprised — more disappointed, really — to see that it was still only an ordinary brownish trickle. Then, just at that same moment, he realized with enormous panic what he had done. His chest began to thump and he almost couldn't breathe. He thought fast prayers of contrition even though

it wasn't blasphemy . . . please God it *wasn't* blasphemy because he hadn't meant anything wrong . . . no, sweet Jesus, you understand . . . please understand . . . He got out of the chapel as fast as he could, for the first time in his life leaving even his surplice sloppy on the back of a chair.

Outdoors it was much better. In the sunlight he knew his heart was pure, and he wasn't afraid.

Terry was halfway into the village when he saw the rectory car — the only car around with a factory shine — glaring ahead of him. He pretended not to see it, and just kept walking. Oh, shoot. The car stopped, and Father Holzkopf stuck his head out the window.

"Terence, come here. I want to talk to you."

"Oh, Hi, Father. I didn't see you coming."

"Head in the clouds again? Yes. However, I just now was to see your grandmother — you remember you told me she was ailing? — and I heard something that, shall I say, shocked and disappointed me. Your grandmother," and he leaned farther out the window, "is in grave danger of losing her immortal soul. When I walked into the room she was chanting, I say, wailing a prayer or something to someone, I don't know whom, but it wasn't the Virgin Mary, of that I am certain."

Terry flushed at the implied rebuke. "I know. That's the Maiden-who-becomes-a-Bear. She does, sometimes, when she forgets." He was begging for her now. "But don't you think it's all right? What can it hurt? She's so old, really she is."

"So. You told me nothing of this before. We must put a stop to it. So. She *is* very old, do you understand, and in grave danger of damnation if this is allowed to continue. I will visit her again this afternoon." Father Holzkopf hummed a little tune, and Terry



*Illustration by Cheryl Babineau, '67*

wondered if maybe he should go away; but then the priest said suddenly, "The men are coming today."

So what's it to me? thought brave Terry. "What men, Father?"

Father Holzkopf chuckled and was coy. "Why, the men who will lay the cement, of course. To protect God's house from filth and dirt. What men did you think?"

"I don't know. I didn't know we were going to have cement. Won't it be expensive?"

Father Holzkopf stopped smiling. "We need it," he said. "You know how dusty it gets in there, You all track it in, every time one of you sets foot in the church. It's a disgrace to the Almighty," and he looked accusingly at Terry, "to have filth all over his floors."

"Yes, Father," Terry agreed. But he was only being polite. He wasn't sure what he was supposed to say. But he guessed he had to say something. "Where are they going to put it?"

"Hah!" shouted Father Holzkopf. "We will have it all over — eight hundred feet front and both sides, and twelve hundred feet in the back, for a parking lot. Is that all right with you? My fine little Navaho, does that meet with your approval?"

Terry shrugged. "I guess so."

"Well, then, good day. Tell your grandmother to expect me."

Gee, Terry thought. I wonder what *he* wanted. Oh, well. At least he didn't seem so cross. Funny, but he'd never said anything about having cement before. Terry tried to think how far back twelve hundred feet was — the church was so small — it would be beyond the border of junipers, anyway. He couldn't figure the whole thing out. Of course, it wouldn't cover up the Sacred Ground, but it'd come pretty close. Twelve hundred feet seemed an awful lot. That *was* a long way back! The Sacred Ground came almost up to the junipers, and the junipers weren't very far from the church.

Terry got a horrible sick feeling in the pit of his stomach. The cement would, in fact, almost completely cover the Sacred Ground. He turned around and started running.

I've got to tell him, he thought. It's not possible; he doesn't know what he's doing. He *must* have forgotten the earth-dances, twice a year, anyway; and then when anyone was sick . . . . He must have forgotten. But that was silly. Father Holzkopf always knew what he was about. A parking lot, he said, while I just stood there smiling and nodding my head. What an ass I must have looked, and Terry cursed his own stupidity.



A couple of minutes later Terry was ringing the rectory doorbell. The housekeeper took her time coming, then muttered something about a waste of energy when she saw it was only Terry. "What do *you* want?" she asked.

"I want to talk to Father."

"You can't, he's busy. You're not the only sheep in his flock, you know. Now go on home."

"I've got to see him. Please, it's very important. I have to see him right now. Can't you at least tell him I'm here?"

"Well, well, well," she said, and looked at Terry with a nasty leer. "Surely Terence-boy can't be in trouble. Something on your conscience, huh? Something really bad? Well, go on, now. Sit down. Father will be with you as soon as he gets a chance."

Terry was ready to give up and go home — it was that long — when the priest finally came into the parlor. It looked like he was back in a bad mood.

"What is it now, Terry?"

"You can't do it, Father. They'll never let you do it, I swear they won't."

"Won't let me WHAT? Speak up, make yourself clear."

Terry took a deep breath. "Navaho do not dance on cement."

Father Holzkopf laughed. "Come, come, now. You're being somewhat melodramatic, don't you think? Now what is it you want to tell me?"

"You must not cover the Sacred Ground with cement. The Navaho have to be in contact with the earth, or else the ceremonies are no good, and don't mean anything at all. If you cover the ground with cement . . . you *can't*, I'm not lying, Father. . . ."

The priest put his arm around Terry's shoulders. "Terence, my son, you speak only of pagan Navaho. After all, we are a Christian community, and pagan ceremonies mean nothing to us except as remembrance of time past. Your friends may still dance someplace else. Now just between us, Terry, you and myself, your little display of histrionics there, it will not serve you," he paused a moment, "in the seminary." He pulled a sheet of paper from his desk. "I have already written

your recommendation. I believe I can get you accepted on an early admissions basis, if you wish."

Terry had not expected this — oh, they had talked of his vocation many times, but Father Holzkopf had never seemed particularly encouraging. But now, this! All his fury and unhappiness disappeared and he felt instead a little humiliation for the anger he had felt, and love for the gray-haired old priest, and the beginnings of a great wild joy.

"Oh, Father, yes," he answered fervently. "Thank you. More than anything in the whole world, I always wanted to be a priest."

Father Holzkopf looked Terry full in the face. "I'm very proud of you, my boy. You have it in you to be a fine priest. Pray that you may be worthy of your vocation, for many are called, but few are chosen. Perhaps, some day, you will serve in this very mission, among your own people, as Isletta's first Navaho father. I'm *very* proud of you."

They talked together for a little while longer. The priest repeated much of his old advice about praying and studying and making good use of one's time, and gave Terry one new caution:

"Between now and September, I strongly advise you to avoid contact with the opposite sex as much as possible." He was very stern about this. "Carnal diversions rot the body, corrupt the mind, and damn the soul."

Still, Terry's heart was light when he left the rectory. He wanted to race home and shout his good news to the whole world; but it would not have been fitting, to act like a wildman, so instead he carried himself slowly and with dignity back to his house.

He stepped into the room, and his mother looked up. She was getting so old! Really, Terry thought, she works too hard, making those chintzy little trinkets. He guessed that it'd be much easier for her when he wouldn't be around to be fed all the time, and clothed. She'd probably be real proud of him, too.

"Ma," he said softly, "I'm going to be a priest. It's almost all set, and I think I'm leaving for the seminary in September . . . Did you hear me, Ma?"

"I heard you, Terry." For a moment, the tired look left her face. "I'm glad for you. I

could see it coming, the way you've been spending more and more of your time with the white priest — the old one." Then the weary look was back in her eyes. "Your brother's home . . . he's resting there in the back. He said he wanted to see you."

"Quincy's home? That's great! I can hardly wait to tell him. Is he asleep? Can I go in and see him? He's okay and everything, isn't he?"

"He's fine," she said shortly. "Go ahead."

This was the second thing Terry had wanted more than anything in the world — for his brother to come home. It had been five years since he had last seen Quincy, and now that he was really here Terry was a little afraid that maybe Quincy had changed and wouldn't like him anymore, maybe wouldn't even recognize him. But Quincy wasn't asleep when Terry stepped into the room, and he jumped up and laughed and rubbed his eyes pretending that he couldn't believe them. Everything was all right.

"Terry boy! How are ya?"

"Fine, I guess. How are you?"

"Never been better, kid, never been better. I've really been around. God, you've sure grown up a lot since I left." He winked. "Got a lot of women friends, I bet."

Terry blushed; "No, I don't."

"You're kidding me. Sure you got girls." Quincy laughed, a loud horsey laugh. "Why, I remember how it was, when I was your age . . . what are you now, fifteen? . . . yeah, when I was fifteen. . . ."

". . . You left home." Right away Terry knew he shouldn't have said that. It sounded like he was mad at Quincy, like he didn't want to see him and wished he hadn't come back. But Quincy just laughed and clapped him on the back.

"You wouldn't hold *that* against me, would you?"

"Heck, no Quincy. Of course not. It's just that you were gone so long. You're gonna stay for good now aren't you? What were you doing all that time anyway?"

Quincy snorted. "You think Ma will have me? She didn't look any too happy to see me."

"Course she will," Terry said loyally. "You're her first-born. She probably was just

surprised. But what have you been doing? Mike Rainwater says you've been fighting for freedom, and we should all be proud of you. Louie," and he hesitated, "Louie says you're a loud-mouth troubleshooter."

Quincy shrugged. "Louie's an ass. Is Rainwater still sheriff? Good. I want to get down to see him this afternoon."

"But Quincy, what is it that you do? Do you go a lot of different places? Do you have a job?"

Quincy straightened his shoulders and looked very solemn. "Yes, I have a job, although I am paid by no man. My job? It is to preserve the dignity of human life." He relaxed again, and looked at Terry. "But now tell me. What have *you* been doing? What are your plans, little brother?"

So finally he had asked. Terry had so wanted to tell him the good news. "I'm going to be a priest." he said proudly.

Quincy just looked at him. Then he banged the side of his head, pretended to clean his ears, and looked again. "Did I hear you right? Did you say . . .?"

"I'm going to be a priest."

"That's what I thought you said. You gotta be kidding . . . You're not kidding?"

Terry shook his head.

"Son-of-a-gun! You know what you're saying? You must be out of your head."

Terry could feel his face getting hot. He was mad. "What do you mean by a crack like that?"

"Never mind. Forget it. I didn't mean anything. Now, go on out, will you, and let me get some sleep."

"Okay. Sure, Quincy."

"Just a minute. I'll treat you to supper. You're a good kid. Sacha's Bar & Grille okay?"

"You betcha." Terry grinned. "Seven o'clock."

That afternoon, the cement truck came. It made a great noise for a small pueblo; flimsy homes shuddered and babies choked in the flying dust.

Then it was gone out of sight, away from the village. Nobody cared to chase after it on such a hot day, and only the very young were curious. Things are, after all, what they are;



and trucks from outside didn't seem to be anyone's concern. Besides, trucks were always rumbling through on their way from someplace to someplace else.

And so it was that early that evening an angry and very puzzled group of men visited Father Holzkopf to raise furious objections.

"I'm terribly sorry," the priest said tranquilly, "but you're too late. The cement's been poured, don't you see, and I wouldn't be a bit surprised if it were solid already. You should have come before."

Mark Rainwater stepped forward. "But Reverend Father, none of us knew of your plans. You have covered the Sacred Ground. It is intolerable. We should have been informed."

Father Holzkopf raised his eyebrows. "But I announced it after Mass this morning. Perhaps, in the future, if more of you attended daily Mass, such misunderstandings could be avoided. And now, if you'll excuse me . . . ."

"Wait, Father, please."

The council of protest muttered together a moment, and Mark Rainwater came forward a second time. "*We* will remove the cement that covers the Sacred Ground."

"No. I'm sorry," Father Holzkopf answered, "but I'm afraid I can't let you do that. Under pain of mortal sin, you must not. That ground was an offense to the eyes of God, but for its dust to be tracked even into his house, that is nothing short of blasphemy. The cement will remain as it is." He turned back to the rectory. "I wish you all, gentlemen, good night."

The sheriff and his men stood around cursing and swearing under their breaths. "What'll we do now, Mark?"

"I don't know." Mark Rainwater shook his head. "What can we do?"

"Well, I guess there's not much point in standing around here. Why don't we go down Sacha's? Someone's bound to think of something."

The motion was carried.

Terry was early, and the place was so shadowed he couldn't tell if Quincy was there or not. But then he heard his brother's laugh and groped his way over to where Quincy

was sitting with an unusually huge, unusually black, fat man. There was no third chair.

Quincy looked up, and saw Terry standing there. "My kid brother," he said by way of introduction. "Wants to be a priest."

The black man laughed, showing yellow teeth. "Right. A priest. A white priest. Man, that's rich. An Indian white priest. What you wanna do a thing like that for?"

Terry decided he didn't have to answer him. He suspected the man was drunk, and he wished he'd leave his brother alone. Besides, he was sitting in Terry's chair.

"All right, man. Play your little game. But you'll find out."

The black man left, and Terry sat down in the warm seat. "That man that was just here," he asked, "was he drunk?"

"Who knows?" Quincy winked at a passing waitress. "Hey, Doll, c'mere."

"May I take your order, sir?"

Quincy winked again. "Yeah, but I don't believe it's on the menu."

"Aw, go on with you. What'll it be, chief?"

"Two whiskey sours, for a start."

Terry didn't like this. "I'm not eighteen," he volunteered.

Quincy gave an exasperated sigh. "What's that got to do with it? Go on, Dollie, fetch."

Terry didn't much care for the way things were turning out, even though he couldn't have said what he did expect. Quincy really had changed after all, he guessed. But in a way, it was exciting. He'd never had a drink before, or sat in a bar.

"Well, now," Quincy said. "What's all this rot about you wanting to be a priest? I'm worried about you, kid. Like, you're all the family I got, and I don't want to see you buried in some monk's hole. You sure you know what you're getting yourself into? I wouldn't ask, except, like I said, I'm worried about you. A priest — god, what a stinking idea."

"You don't understand," Terry said sulkily. He couldn't figure out why Quincy was behaving this way. Couldn't he see the beauty of a life of noble selfless dedication? What was the matter with him anyway? He was probably just jealous because *he* didn't have a vocation.

Terry told him so. "You're just jealous 'cause you don't have a vocation."

Quincy roared. "Jealous? That's funny, that really is. Me, jealous. Listen, kid, I wouldn't want one. I wouldn't have a vocation for a million dollars. All that mumbo-jumbo, and doing the magic bit, that's bad enough. But priest, hell, that's no proper business for a full-blooded Navaho." He stopped a minute to wipe the laughing tears away, then asked point-blank, "You ever had a girl?"

"That's none of your business. That has nothing to do with it." Terry was furious. "I'm leaving. I'm sick and tired of all your snide remarks and sly . . . sly . . ."

"Insinuations? Aw, sit down. It's nothing to get all hot and bothered about. I was just curious, that's all."

"Carnal diversions rot the body, corrupt the mind, and damn the soul." Terry sat stiffly down.

Quincy wasn't the least bit impressed. He snorted, then spit on the floor. "Hah!" he said. "Goes to show how much you know about it. Truth of the matter is, it's purity does all that — rots the body, corrupts the mind, and poisons the soul. Look at me, Terry. Do I look like I'm ready to fall apart?" and he sang, "Oh, flesh beautiful flesh. Candy is sweet, but sex doesn't rot your teeth."

"Shut up, said Terry. "I think you are a pig." But he was fascinated in spite of himself. To hear this filth pour forth from his own brother's mouth, blood of his own blood — it couldn't have been more shocking than if he'd said it himself.

But Quincy hadn't shut up anyway. "No, you listen. I know what I'm talking about."

"I don't want to listen. Your talk is offensive and disgusting."

"Who fed you that crap, kid? It's time you grew up. You're the biggest baby."

"I am not," Terry said. "Please pass me the damn sugar."

Quincy watched in horror while his brother sugared his drink, and made a gagging noise when Terry gulped it down. "Maybe you really are hopeless. Listen. If you want to be a priest, go ahead and be one. We'll see how long it lasts, but no one . . ."

But he didn't finish his sentence, because just then the mob of sheriff's men came in. "Mark Rainwater," Quincy called. "What's with the grim-faced council? Hitting the warpath?"

"That's about the size of it." The sheriff came over to Quincy and told him the whole dark story.

When he finished, a strange expression came over Quincy's face — excited, and almost happy, it seemed.

"Oh, that's terrible," he said gleefully. "We cannot allow this sort of thing. This is flagrant oppression. Why don't we just go and break up the cement? After all, he has no right. He's gotta learn the score someday. The white men have had it. We'll show him."

"That's what we thought," the sheriff said; then he looked sheepish. "We can't break up the cement. Father Holzkopf has put a curse on anyone who does."

"A curse? Oh, come off it. This is the twentieth century. Surely you're not afraid of any white man's curse. I'm not, anyway."

"You can't do it alone, Quincy."

"You mean to stand there and tell me you're all too scared? Hell, what's this world coming to? Yellow bellies, all of you. Well, we'll have to think of something else."

Just then Mark noticed Terry, who was carefully not looking at anyone. The sheriff's face grew livid. "Why don't you ask your kid brother for some ideas. After all, him and Josef Holzkopf are real good friends." He turned to Terry. "Isn't that right, white Indian? What did *you* know about this, huh? What'd your friend in the black dress tell you? C'mon, answer me. You knew about this, didn't you?"

"No! I didn't know. I forgot. He told me, but I forgot. Leave me alone."

Mark sneered. "Lord bless him, he forgot. Clean slipped his mind, I guess; such a small matter, after all. Besides, we *like* to do the earth dances on cement, don't we, fish belly?"

Quincy gave his brother a look filled with disgust. "You? God, it's true, isn't it? That figures. Damn your lily-white soul, you're no brother of mine."

"Quincy, listen, *please*. I didn't do it," and Terry began to cry softly to himself.



Quincy ignored him, and turned again to Rainwater. "What does this man Holzkopf do, anyway? I mean, has he ever done anything for you? For any of you?"

Mark stared at him. "Why, he's the priest, he runs the church. You know that, Quincy."

"Yes, yes. But we don't really need him for anything, do we? Wouldn't we be better off without him? Seems to me he's just out to make trouble for all of us."

"Look, Quincy, I don't know what you're trying to get at, but he's not all that bad, really. Maybe if we talked to him . . ."

"I thought you said you talked to him already."

"Well, we did, but . . ."

"Do you think it would make any difference if you talked to him again? C'mon, now. Listen, Mark, the time for talk is over. We have to *do* something."

"You can't hurt him."

"Of course not." Quincy looked hurt that Mark should suggest such a thing. "We'll just let him know that his services around here are no longer required. Nothing violent. Make me your deputy, Mark, and I'll take care of it."

"Well, now, I don't know. If you're sure you won't hurt him . . . I guess it's all right. Okay, go ahead."

"Thanks, sheriff. I don't think you'll regret this. Now, who wants to come with me?"

Terry lifted his head from the table and blew his nose. His eyes widened with hope. He knew now, in spite of everything, that he was on Quincy's side. His big brother needed his help. A second chance, that's what it was. "I'll come."

"Sorry. Besides, you're drunk."

"I am not." There was a hard determined look in Terry's eyes now. "I'm coming, and you can't stop me."

Quincy shrugged. "Have it your way. Anyone else coming along?"

One other man stepped out, but that was all.

"Three's enough," Quincy said, and they walked out of the bar.

Along the way to Father Holzkopf's none of them had much to say. Once Terry asked, "What'll we do when we get there?" but

Quincy said nothing, and then they were there.

Quincy went up to the rectory door and banged once, hard. Almost immediately, Father Holzkopf was there.

"Yes? Who are you? What do you want?"

"Sick call," said Quincy. "Better hurry."

"I'll be right there," Father Holzkopf said, and was as good as his word. He came out of the house and saw Terry. "Why, Terence, what is it? Not your grandmother, I hope."

Quincy handed his brother a rope. "Tie his hands behind his back."

"What are you doing? Terence, is this some kind of a joke?"

"No joke," Terry said. His voice shook, but he tied a good strong knot.

"Stop that," the priest said. "Desist at once! This is a sacrilege. Have you gone insane? Terence, you've been drinking, haven't you? Untie that knot . . . **YOU PUT ME DOWN,**" he screamed at Quincy.

He looked very funny, Terry thought, draped like a shawl over his brothers' shoulders, and try as he would, he couldn't help laughing. He didn't stop laughing until it was his turn to take up the priestly burden. The old man was heavier than he looked, and Terry staggered the first few steps. He got his balance then, and they went on in silence. It was very dark. Chuck, the third one, was carrying the priest when they reached the highway.

"Stop," Quincy said. "We'll leave him here."

"I . . . I might get run over," the old man said feebly, and for a moment it looked as though he might cry.

It was Terry instead who started to cry. "Don't worry about it, please Father, you won't get run over; I know you won't; don't be upset, because someone will come along, and everything will be all right. I'm so sorry; we didn't mean any harm, but we had to, because . . ."

At that, Father Holzkopf's head snapped up. He glared at Terry and hissed, "Quit your blubbering, Terence." You could never have been a priest anyway, so it's no loss to you." The priest settled himself as comfortably as he could, and looked up at Quincy. "If

you're going, gentlemen, I wish you'd leave now."

"Just a minute, Father Holzkopf." Terry drew himself up to his full height. "I wouldn't want a vocation for a million dollars. Candy is sweet, but sex doesn't rot your teeth."

He laughed all the way home, and went to sleep with his sides aching from the rigours of his good humour. For the first time in over a year, he slept late the next morning.

When he finally did get up, Quincy was gone.

"But where'd he go, Ma? I've got to talk to him. What'd he say to tell me? Didn't he say anything about last night or anything?"

"You ask me?" I haven't seen him since yesterday afternoon. All his things are gone, too. But where were *you* last night? Look at you now; your breath stinks and you haven't even changed you clothes. Listen to me, Terence. You're only a boy, a good boy; and I'm telling you now that your brother is no good at all. He never was any good, and I used to worry about you, always wanting to be with him, that you'd turn out the same way. It was all right until . . ." her voice broke off, and she started scolding. "Where were you last night? Why aren't you down at the church? What have you been doing, you and that no-good . . ."

"I don't want to talk about it," Terry muttered, "I'm going out."

But there wasn't any place he wanted to go, really. His sides hurt, and his eyes felt scratchy. He guessed that what he really wanted to do was just to die. But it was too late now, even for that. He should have died yesterday; been dead when Quincy came home. Then they would have been sorry — Quincy and Father Holzkopf, and all the rest of them. Not that it mattered now. So what if I go to hell, he said to himself. I don't care. And then — he couldn't help it — Terry started to shudder all over.

Please, help me. Quincy was always bad, but not me; I don't want to die. I'm a good boy; I didn't mean anything wrong. Oh, Quincy, help me, I'm so sorry. I won't die, I promise, but please, I just can't stand it. I'm not making sense? Excuse me. I have, you know, gone hoopy — and he tried desperately

to make sense.

Last night, of course! What was last night? Ah, yes, how exciting it had been, with Quincy, and the waitress (in a tight close dress) bringing them whiskey. No! Holy Mother of God, keep me clean in thought, word, and deed. But it was no good.

He began running clumsy and stumbling until his feet picked up the pace and sped him along a familiar road. JESUS HAVE MERCY, he read, and opened the door. His surplice was still sloppy on the back of a chair. How strange, he thought, I'm usually such a neat boy. Yes, Mrs. Tahoma, you can be very proud of your son. Many are called, but few are chosen, for what it's worth; so he went outside and sat on the steps.

After a long time a shiny-looking car pulled up and three priests stepped out. They didn't talk, or smile; not like real people at all. They walked past him into the church.

What if Father Holzkopf was dead, and Terry had helped kill him.

Terry couldn't blame them for hating him; there was no way he could explain, to these three faces, or make them understand.

Then in a bit they came out, and the last one turned a big key in the door, and put a padlock on the handle. He looked at Terry.

"We're closing this church," he said, "by order of the bishop. It will be a great loss to you and your people. Father Holzkopf has requested a transfer and we have no one to replace him. I am sorry. Do you come here often?"

"Oh, no. I'm not a Catholic."

"I see. Well, will you tell your Catholic friends that they may attend Mass in Albuquerque? It's not too far from here. We will post a notice of course; but perhaps you could help spread the word around, if you don't mind?" He smiled at Terry, a beautiful smile, and Terry loved him.

"I'll tell them."

"Thank you. Well, good bye."

"Good bye. Father?"

The priest stopped. "Yes? What is it?"

"Nothing. I'm sorry."

"Oh, I don't mind," the priest said cheerfully. "Bye now." Then he hurried out to the car. His friends were waiting.



# death

death  
is an abstraction, a misnomer  
isn't it?  
what is death  
to the glassy-eyed mourner  
or to the soul that discovers only that  
earth had nothing on paradise?  
i was dead once  
wasn't i?  
when i sat under the summer-hot sky  
and peered through dark branches at a star  
and felt soft grass turn blade-sharp  
and heard the olive leaves scream  
i could not speak to you . . .  
no glassy-eyed mourner  
wept for me then  
and i knew nothing of paradise  
but i was dead —  
wasn't i?

PATRICA A. RIOUX, '70

# *King Cnut*

KAREN CORSANO, '67



*Illustration by Mary E. Fogarty, '66*



“*T*his tiresome task to be king to these villains,” Cnut scowled.

“Aye, m’lord,” murmured a dozen thanes.

Cnut grimaced at the mechanical agreement and reached for his cup. “Here, your lordship,” stammered a thane, setting it in his hand. The king slammed it down, rose and was mimicked as a dozen thanes jumped to their feet. His cloak was adjusted before he could move his hand for it.

“Damn you all!” he sputtered, “are we king, conqueror of nations and lands, or infant, cradle-bound that you’ll have us?”

“Nay, my lord, before you the oceans stoop; for you all are obedient save the gods, your fathers.”

“Before us the oceans stoop! Are we to have no peace with your scrapings? Here, we shall see if the ocean dare insult our regal toes. Bring our throne — to the ocean edge.”

Cnut laughed as the mumbling herd of thanes dispatched his will with blank expressions. He wondered how many really believed he ruled the tide. Then, turning to the cold blue sky, he mumbled himself.

The tide was half in. A rim of black seaweed showed about ten feet away from the water’s edge, where the last tide had left it. His rough-hewn chair was placed well within that line, a few feet from the lapping wavelets that broke one after another pushing a line of foam further onto the sand.

“Now if we ruled the sea-tide, what wave would dare wet our foot? None, of course. So sit down beside us. Must we bother ourself with the direction of the water’s flowing, or shall it see to it of its own accord? We are, after all, so busy with our own affairs. Watch now the temerity of these waves to approach as close as this without some least acknowledgement of our presence.”

The thanes listened red-faced to their king’s lesson and squirmed as the king, sprawled in his throne, commented wryly on the waves’ approach. Finally the water inched up to the king and splashed around his ankles. His twelve thanes sitting in the water were grimly uncomfortable, and thoroughly ready to let Cnut fix his cloak for himself whenever he would. Cnut, finishing his game, wiggled his feet in the foaming water. “Oh, dear, what gruesome thing this is; we’re as helpless as a French idiot. O well, as they say about time and tide . . . . And we hope you all gather our meaning. Yet love us still, for your king are we, though the waves do show disrespect.”

The twelve were warriors and seamen and loved their king the better for it.

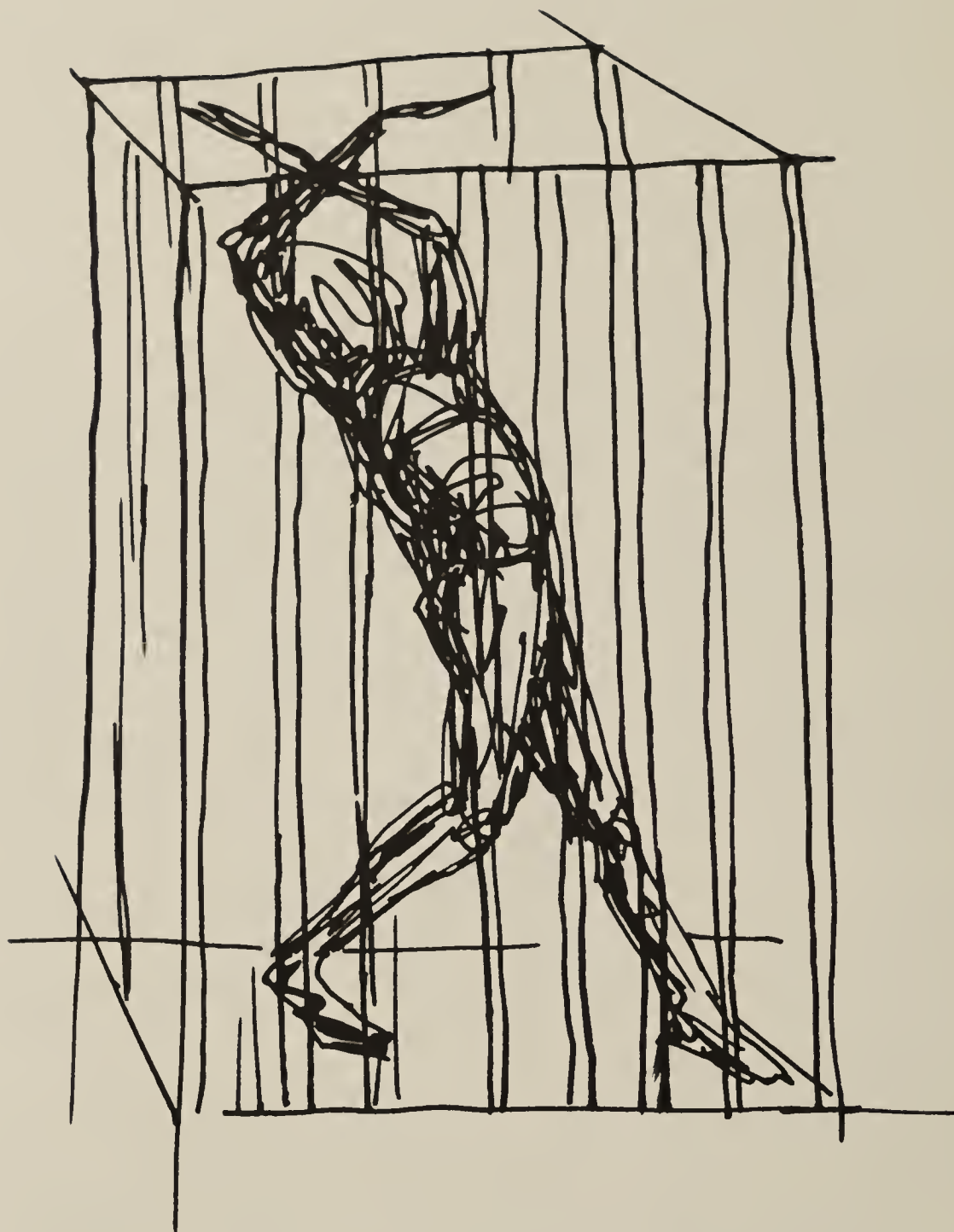
“Now go home,” the king instructed. “We would enjoy this sea-beach alone a little while.”

The twelve were surprised but quickly drew off; some of them even spoke their leave-takings aloud instead of mumbling.

Cnut sat there and mused on the sky and sea for a while. A brisk wind blew white waves down on the shore and sang in the eelgrass. Finally he bestirred himself and, conscious of the ankle-deep water in which he was sitting, spoke abruptly, “Now as for you, we’ve finished with our silly thanes and you may off my feet; and mind: you have not our permission to be washing over us any time hence that we meet.”

Within seconds the waves crowded back upon one another and became quiet pools at a respectful distance from the king’s regal feet. He laughed and walked back up the beach.

His oaken throne chair turned and shuffled after.



*Illustration by Regina Preziosi*

# The Cage

EILEEN GUNN, '67



Yes it definitely was a cage. Funny he'd never noticed it before. He could walk, and put his hand between the bars, and stare at the people on the outside if he wanted; but it definitely was a cage, and it went all around him. Vertical black bars — probably wrought iron. Did you know that the present tense of wrought is work? There was this girl I didn't like, and she asked what the present tense of wrought was — just to annoy me. And I said, you know, I couldn't care less. It bothered me, though, and it took me two days to figure it out; but she never knew. You can't let people like that know they're getting to you. I just don't let them know. It might not help me — in fact, it won't do me any good at all.

The cage was getting darker. It had been a little blurred around the edges before. He felt he could reach out and touch the bars, so he did. He hit them with a ballpoint pen and produced a faint ring, then looked around anxiously, but nobody seemed to have noticed. There was a girl sitting right next to him but she didn't turn around. She didn't hear it then . . . or maybe she did. Maybe she did hear it and she was just pretending. They do things like that sometimes just to make you nervous. Sometimes they stand in a circle and stare, because they know I don't like it. They stand in their cold circle for weeks, and it doesn't matter whether I'm there or not.

He got up and moved out of the center of the circle, along the periphery of the crowd to the edge of the room, and stood in a corner, *the* corner, facing the wall. The girl must have followed him; she said something in a low tone. Was it a question? He could see her words float outside in gaseous swirls. He could even hear what she said, but it didn't mean anything . . . The white fog of her voice curled and convoluted outside the cage, and he watched it absently. It was pretty in an odd sort of way, like she was . . . When he met her, he hadn't thought she was pretty at all, just rather odd-looking — but not offensively odd, like some of those girls who know they're not pretty and decide to make the worst of it.

But there was no *real* difference between

anybody out there. He hadn't realized that before; now it seemed very clear. There wasn't a word for this because they didn't know about it. He wanted a personal, unspoken word that meant living like this. Because now that the cage was there, there was no way to leave, and no where to go even if he did leave.

He rocked back and forth in his cage, hitting it against the wall and knocking chunks of plaster out. It wasn't exactly fun, but it was pleasant enough, you know, and he felt he could go on like that all night, or as long as the wall lasted, anyway. Then he moved slowly back and forth, swinging the knob at the top of his cage against the wall, scratching it in a wide curve, going deeper and deeper until the brown lathe-skeleton of the wall showed through.

He sat quietly for a while, admiring the white curves and gouges in the blue wall. It reminded him a bit of a Wedgewood pitcher — there was a certain serenity about it. It seemed there wasn't anything in the world worth doing except sitting there, facing the wall. If you watched it long enough, your mind acquired its beautiful blankness.

He stared at the tip of his nose for a while, slowly moving his head back and forth. It made him dizzy.

There was that big fat guy at that party, played electric bass for a blues band. He kept watching everybody with his pale pig's eyes, and he singled me out when I was talking to the cats, and asked if they were freaked out. I moved back behind the organ and rolled into a ball and didn't move for an hour. And he kept biting off his fingers. His *fingers*. He was a guitarist; man, you just don't bite off your fingers like that.

The girl was standing near him, making soothing noises when all the time he knew she was worried about the wall. He ignored her patiently — she'd go away soon enough. Why couldn't she leave him in peace for just a little while, though? She was still talking in a low voice, but he could hear an edge coming into it. It wouldn't be long now, she'd give up her pretense and leave him alone.

# Processional

two by two  
they cross the commons  
treading softly  
in the footsteps  
of the Lord  
sifting  
their steady plod  
through the Sabbath snow  
two by two  
keen-sore  
from the windwhip  
keen-sore  
from the grace of God  
lashing their faces  
starch-pure —  
pure as the sepulchre  
*onward*  
*onward christian soldiers*  
two by two  
they mount  
the wood warp  
testing each stair  
with measured somberness  
inside, they hibernate  
awaiting the millenium  
till noon  
two by two  
they press the threshold  
then rewind  
across the commons —  
a thin black line  
cut tight  
against the bite  
of zero  
labelled “elect —  
no trespassing”

ELAINE CARROLL, '68





*Illustration by Gerry Graham, '67*

*As a departure from the traditional book-review section, the editors are presenting some attitudes and cross-currents in contemporary literature.*

*And every time again and again  
I make my lament against destruction.*

(Yevtuskenko, "People")

There are times when a writer must create a darkness from which there is no immediate escape, no facile enlightenment. But this leaves all of us who live in a world of absurdities and ironies wondering whether we are intellectually impotent and unable to resolve our own flagellant oppositions.

It is easy to stand outside of the reality of our times and insist on immediate peace between conflicting ideologies and destructive world forces. It is easier still to escape the need for a total re-evaluation of the truths and errors that together give pattern to a set of emotionally charged tenets about man and his future. What is most difficult is the never-ending search, the constant probing by individuals and nations for an honest basis of agreement.

The Marquis de Sade reacted against the optimism of Rousseau by exploring the facts of perversion and malignancy. His was one of the first attempts to study the nature of his own sickness, and not to hide the fact that man has tendencies other than his will to the divine. But his works were not acknowledged or published openly.

The French Revolution aborted its promise for the masses and became a chaotic blend of persecution, injustice, and sadism. The mobs went wild in their exhilaration of power, and slaughtering was justified by the idealistic

aims of the cause. In Peter Weiss's terms, the Revolution had neglected to consider what it would do after the destruction of the old regime, and how it would implement a system which provided solid ground for liberty, fraternity and equality; these are three abstract goals which at best find only an approximation and bad imitation in reality. A system guided by ideals can make provisions in its charter for the working out of these ideals and leave the individuals free to take advantage of them in concrete situations. How many of them actually do?

Revolution by force made an entire class conscious that the ordinary man could bring about social change and not live under oppression and the continual surrender of his right to initiate the laws by which he lives. The price of this awareness was great; many times we have paid in blood. Nations born of Christian ideals have invented the most hideous methods of annihilation that the world has ever seen. And we accommodate ourselves to this means of defense when the greatest defense is the continuation of life and the recognition of our common humanity.

*Marat/Sade* portrays the false emphasis of both Socialism and Democracy. The third alternative will not be likely to offer itself until the East and the West initiate earnest communication. These two poles of thought should not force conversion but make a sincere effort towards respect, understanding and appreciation of ideological similarities. Politically this may never happen because it

would involve honesty and the admission of the pragmatic strain that has been suppressed and denied in both Russia and America.

If we can not speak directly to the people of Russia then one of the most fundamental ways of arriving at understanding is through art. Russian artists are politically and artistically committed. The avant-garde Yevtushenko, Voznesensky, and Akmadulina are members of the Communist Youth Organization. Tvardovsky, who is the editor of *Novy Mir*, is also a member of the Central Committee and is responsible for having printed Dusintsev, Solzhenitsyn, Ehrenburg and Pastovsky — all members of the liberal faction. These men are in a position to initiate ideological revision. Their literature reflects political aims. Some desire a closer contact with the art of the West; some advocate modifications and reappraisals of ideology; others insist on the separation of Art and State. All are concerned with the struggles of the Russian people. If the Russian artists win their right to experiment within art and also influence the direction of the Party line, we may soon be looking to Russia for a perspective on the problem of international communications and the issues in *Marat/Sade*.

MAUREEN CRIGHTON, '67

*Yevtushenko: Selected Poems* Trans. by Robin Millnes Gulland and Peter Levi. S. J., Penguin, 1962.

Only the poet who is deeply organically bound with his own generation can later become the spokesman of moods and feelings common to the entire people.

In this way Evgeny Alexandrovich Yevtushenko attempts to explain his conviction that a poet must be very much "of his people." From the beginnings of his career Yevtushenko has repeatedly emphasized this belief, producing poems which revolve around personal concern for individuals.

Yevtushenko's work can be looked upon as that of a young Soviet writer or as the "voice of Russia's angry young poet." But when read and taken in isolation from nationalistic associations, the content reveals a deep sensitivity and awareness of the people:

Katya was her name, she was nine.  
I'd no idea what I could do about her,  
but doubt quickly dissolved to certainty:

I'd have to take this thing under my wing;  
— girls were in some sense of the word  
human,  
a human being just couldn't be left.

The world was big and we were not big,  
And it was tough to walk across it . . .

A young boy helping a little girl — there is nothing extraordinary about this depiction, but somehow a sense of the tenderness of this war-time scene emerges from the simple expression. The didactic style, however, has caused some critics to dismiss Yevtushenko as insignificant, attributing his fame to the "rebellious spirit" in the Soviet Union today.

But the feelings which come through so clearly are not peculiar to one nation or ideology. They are an expression of our age. Yevtushenko is the representative of a generation that is so accustomed to the threat of nuclear war that it has become almost oblivious to the reality of danger. Yet, he is concerned with meaningless death:

In any man who dies there dies with him  
his first snow kiss and fight  
by the rule of the game something  
has gone.  
Not people die but worlds die in them.  
Whom we knew as faulty, the earth's  
creatures.

Of whom, essentially, what did we know?

Within this generation the poet stands out as an optimist with very practical tendencies:

Telling lies to the young is wrong.  
Proving to them that lies are true is wrong.  
Telling them that God's in his heaven  
and all's well with world is wrong.  
The young know what you mean. The young  
are people.  
Tell them the difficulties can't be counted,  
and let them see not only what will be  
but see with clarity these present times.  
Say obstacles exist they must encounter  
Sorrow happens, hardship happens.  
The hell with it. Who never knew  
the price of happiness will not be  
happy.  
Forgive no error you recognize,  
it will repeat itself, increase,  
and afterwards our pupils  
will not forgive in us what we forgave.

Perhaps Yevtushenko is guilty of stating the obvious, of neglecting the obscurity which seems to be a criterion in much modern literature. He bears little resemblance to Alexander Blok and the Twentieth Century Russian school of symbolism. He is a disciple of Myakovsky whose Revolutionary energy produced the same exuberance of the sinewy



vernacular, of broken rhythms and intensity which charged the "Civic Odes".

Yevtushenko's poems seem like impatient efforts to express something just experienced or more often something just realized — a new idea that strikes him as he thinks about the living going on around him. Just this concern for people is the force which continues to motivate Yevtushenko's development as "spokesman of the people" and is the aspect which lends universal appeal to the poet's work.

DIANE M. HUNTER, '67

*The persecution and assassination of Jean-Paul Marat as performed by the Inmates of Charenton under the Direction of the Marquis de Sade by Peter Weiss*

During the last thirteen years of his life, the Marquis de Sade was held in the asylum of Charenton where he occupied his time writing plays to be performed by his fellow inmates for their rehabilitation. Jean-Paul Marat was murdered in his bath by a Revolutionary Judith, Charlotte Corday. This is the factual basis of Peter Weiss' play; the remainder of his material is of his own invention.

Ideologically, *Marat/Sade* is a debate upon three systems of thought: that of the old aristocracy, the messianism of Marat, and the individualism of Sade. The failure of each system is brought out; until, finally, a new solution appears, Marxism, which is also riddled with drawbacks.

Both the aristocracy and the priesthood of the old regime are discredited because they do not take into account the sufferings of common men. And it is because they do not that Marat has called for the Revolution which will give the working classes their rights. Marat, an idealistic political crusader who is confined to his bath because of a skin ailment, claims that he is the embodiment of the Revolution:

There is a rioting mob inside me  
Simonne I am the Revolution.

Just as this is a man who is diseased and doomed, his political reforms and visions are diseased, incomplete, and doomed to failure.

Marat's disciple, the socialist priest Jacques Roux, compares the persecution of Marat with that of Christ:

Woe to the man who is different . . .  
who tries to stretch the imagination of man  
He shall be mocked he shall be scourged by  
the blinkered guardians of morality.

Marat eventually realizes that his Revolution has failed the common people just as the old regime failed. Like Genet's *Balcony*, *Marat/Sade* shows that after the destruction, new faces simply step into the old roles of state, and the common man finds that his situation has not changed.

Unlike Marat, Sade is not interested in society and its problems; he is concerned with the inner man, with individuals. The absorption of the individual into the collective is a consequence which Sade cannot accept; his individuality is isolation — a turning inwards to the reality of his imagination. He knows too well the lust and cruelty in man which are not acknowledged by the optimists.

These cells of the inner self  
are worse than the deepest  
stone dungeon and as long as  
they are locked  
All your Revolution remains  
only a prison mutiny to be  
put down by corrupted fellow-  
prisoners

Sade, having no remedy for the poor and oppressed, reduces man to the level of animal — "there's nothing else/beyond the body."

Both Marat and Sade realize that the Revolution has failed to change the lives of the people and their debate in the play has not given them a solution. Marat is murdered and Sade stands discredited.

Thus, the central conflict remains unresolved. While the artist asks his deep questions, it is his audience who must risk the inanity of simplistic answers. But this is a risk which must be taken. The rumbling, dirge-like chant of discontent exists and cannot be ignored:

Marat we're poor and the poor  
stay poor  
Marat don't make us wait any  
more  
We want our rights and we  
don't care how  
We want our Revolution NOW

IRENE SHORTALL, '67





*If begins  
    is true  
then is true  
    for longer than beginning  
And yes is not shouted  
    but whispered  
    or unworded  
In silence  
    the word  
is there  
    still.*

*... and time held the word*